

**MINUTES OF KERSEY PARISH COUNCIL ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON  
MONDAY 11 MARCH 2013 IN KERSEY VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30 PM**

**PRESENT**

Andrew Cumming – Chair, John Maltby, Yvonne Martin, Giles Hollingworth, John Hume, John Robinson, Jeremy Pembroke, 3 members of the public and the Clerk – Sarah Partridge

**35/13 APOLOGIES** were received and accepted from Veronica Partridge, apologies were received from PCSO Amanda Coleman.

**36/13 ACCEPT MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST-** None

**37/13 CONSIDER ANY DISPENSATION REQUESTS FOR PECUNIARY INTERESTS RECEIVED FROM COUNCILLORS** – None received

**38/13 REPORTS** -The meeting was adjourned to receive reports.

**a) Police** – The Clerk read a report from the police. There have been 5 reported crimes since the last full meeting on the 7 January 2013. BURGLARY - Other building. 7-8/01/13 Unknown persons have stolen 2 power drills from an insecure farm outbuilding. THEFT - Other. 09/01/13. Unknown persons have stolen a twin axle trailer from compound to the rear of main farm buildings. THEFT - Other. The Street, 21/12/12 - 04/02/13 approx 800L of heating oil has been stolen sometime between the above dates. CRIMINAL DAMAGE - Wicker Street Green, 09/02/13 - 21/02/13. Unknown persons have caused damage to 5 tree saplings that were planted along the public footpath. All these crimes are finalised with no further lines of enquiry. BURGLARY - Dwelling. Priory Hill, 08/03/13. Sometime during the day unknown persons have gained entry into a detached cottage and stolen electrical items. Investigations are ongoing. There has been an increase in dwelling burglaries within the Babergh area. They seem to enter via a rear window, using a jemmy or smashing the glass then once inside making a search for jewellery. Possible vehicle to look out for is Peugeot or Vauxhall silver/grey which may have 3 or more males within the vehicle; these burglaries are being committed during the daytime. There has been an increase in police patrols at various times of the day and night looking out for anyone acting in a suspicious manner. There is also a spate of vehicle index plates being stolen from vehicles whilst parked secure and unattended and heating oil thefts have started to increase. If you see anyone or any vehicles in the area and think they may be acting in a suspicious manner please contact the police on 101 or 999 if you think a crime is being committed at that time.

**b) Neighbourhood Watch** – Giles Hollingworth had nothing to report.  
*John Robinson joined the meeting.*

**c) Suffolk County Councillor** – Jeremy Pembroke reported that the county council had frozen council tax and are still looking to find more savings in the budget for future years. The County Council elections will be on 2 May 2013. May Gurney is now the preferred bidder in a joint contract for highways and street lighting. He was aware of the poor state of the roads around the county which were all suffering from potholes due to the weather, the highways department are focusing on A and B class roads before working on rural roads. There is a possibility that an improved broadband service may come on-line for some areas of the county in the autumn, sooner than expected. Questions were answered from the floor.  
*Jeremy Pembroke gave his apologies and left the meeting.*

**d) Babergh District Councillor** – No report, late apologies were received from Dawn Kendall  
The meeting was reconvened.

**39/13 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 February 2013 were signed and dated as being correct.

#### **40/13 CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk had been in contact with SCC highways about the many pot holes in the parish, a team is due to visit the area soon. SCC highways are continuing to monitor the new road surface near The Splash where there has been a significant buildup of loose chippings again. A contractor has been asked to sweep the area. SCC highways are continuing to investigate the drainage problem near Ailsa Cottage on The Green. SCC highways has visited the A1141 crossroads and confirm that the shrubby growth has been cut back as far as they can, the remaining growth is on private property, they could not identify a drainage problem when on site but will keep an eye on this location during a wet spell. Bryn Hurren will be carrying out the repair to the Oak village sign over the coming weeks. The lease for areas of the Glebe for the children's playground, exercise equipment and the cricket net, signed by the Parish Council in November has now been signed by Kersey Playing Field Association; one copy of the lease is held by Kersey Playing Field Association and another by the Parish Council. St Mary's PCC were informed of Suffolk Wildlife Trust's initiative for free community barn own boxes, they are now on the waiting list to see if the churchyard is a suitable site for installation next spring. The Clerk spoke to the Slimming World advisor about the sign obscuring visibility for drivers at the bottom of Mill Lane; she apologised for creating a hazard and will take more care when placing signs in future. Sadly this year the annual spring litter collection was very poorly supported by members of the community. The eco-committee at Kersey School collected litter from the areas near the school and church and about 4 residents walked some other roads in the parish. If anyone would like to walk an area of the parish collecting rubbish from the verges it would be much appreciated, please contact John Maltby to find out which areas have not been tidied.

#### **41/13 CORRESPONDENCE**

- a) A programme for the Babergh Core Strategy Examination had been received.
- b) Tim Yeo forwarded a reply from the Local Government Minister regarding the localisation of council tax support. The Parish Council had also received a reply directly from the Department for Communities and Local Government but these replies confirm that there will be no changes to the new system introduced for the coming year.
- c) A consultation document had been received from the Planning Inspectorate for an infrastructure Planning (environmental impact assessment) for the proposed Bramford to Twinstead power line by National Grid. This is a very large document which would take a considerable amount of time to go through properly. Since the proposed line will only affect views towards Polstead from some parts of Kersey and some of this route may be undergrounded it was agreed not to respond.
- d) Suffolk ACRE has now joined with many other voluntary and local organisations to form a new organisation from 1 April 2013 called Community Action Suffolk. The annual subscription for this new combined organisation is £30, an increase of £5 on the expected Suffolk ACRE subscription. It was agreed to pay the annual subscription for this new organisation from 1 April 2013.

#### **42/13 FINANCE**

A copy of the accounts to date and a financial statement, showing bank balances and expenditure for approval were tabled by the Clerk; these are appended to the minutes. Payments were all approved. Councillors all had a copy of the budget comparison for the year, appended, and reviewed actual spending against the budget. The Clerk answered a couple of questions. The Clerk confirmed the level of fidelity guarantee insurance cover is up to £20,000. Including receipt of the first 50% of the precept in early April there will be just under £18,725 in the Parish Council bank accounts so cover is adequate.

#### **43/13 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

No progress on earlier planning applications had been received and no planning applications had been received to discuss. A question was asked about progress on the Little Manor application. (B/12/00211/LBC Little Manor, Kersey – Application for Listed Building consent for internal and external works.) The Clerk will contact Babergh for more information.

#### **44/13 KCPC WORKING GROUP- No report**

#### **45/13 FOOTPATH WORKING GROUP**

John Maltby reported that all paths are walkable. There is a Footpath Working Group meeting on Monday 18 March at 7pm in the village hall.

#### **46/13 TO DISCUSS THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME AND THE BENEFIT TO THE PARISH**

Since taking on the role of Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator Giles Hollingworth had investigated the need for a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in Kersey. A note was put in the newsletter asking for comments, only one was received. The new Police Direct Service offers anyone the facility to sign up to receive crime alerts and updates. It was agreed Kersey should continue to have a Neighbourhood Watch scheme and Giles will continue as the co-ordinator and be a local point of contact for residents. It would be a low key role that can be reactive as and when need arises. Since the police reports to Parish Council meetings are up to date and thorough it was agreed not to receive a regular report from the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator.

#### **47/13 TO DISCUSS THE TIME STREET LIGHTS IN KERSEY ARE SWITCHED ON AND OFF**

A consultation document was published in the Kersey Newsletter and advertised on noticeboards around the parish asking for comments on when street lights in Kersey should be switched on and off. No responses had been received. It has already been agreed that the light outside 9 Vale Lane, opposite the bungalows, will stay on all night from dusk until dawn. Councillors considered various options for the other 5 lights. The new intelligent lighting system means that the Parish Council can choose any regular pattern for the lights to be switched on and off, currently the street lights in Kersey are on between dusk and 11pm and then on again between 5.30am and dawn. It was agreed to have the lights on from dusk till 11pm on Sunday to Thursday nights and dusk till midnight on Friday and Saturday nights, this would add approx. £4 to the annual street lighting bill. It was also agreed that the lights would not come back on again between 5.30am and dawn saving circa £15 per annum.

#### **48/13 TO DISCUSS WAYS TO IMPROVE THE SCRUFFY APPEARANCE OF SOME PARTS OF THE VILLAGE AND IMPROVE FOOTPATH LINKS BETWEEN THE CENTRE OF THE VILLAGE AND VALE LANE INCLUDING THE PROPOSED JUBILEE WALK**

Giles Hollingworth showed Councillors his proposal for Jubilee Walk, perhaps better named Jubilee Steps as the proposal is for a flight of long shallow steps up the hill from the village to the Church lych gate. He showed a scale drawing of the steps including levels and a sketch of how the finished steps would look. His proposal is for a flight of 15 shallow steps approx. 3.175m long by 1.5m wide with a slope of approx. 8° and a step height of 120mm. The flight of steps to be constructed with a timber frame, preferably Larch since this lasts longer, filled with 155mm of crushed stone and then a finished surface. Giles showed an example of one surface under consideration known as Ecobond. It is made from shredded rubber bound together with a liquid resin. It comes in a variety of colours including a mixed green/brown finish which looked suitable. The surface is permeable, nonslip and hard wearing. Unfortunately it is quite expensive at £55 per sq meter. The total cost of the Ecobond surface for the steps to supply and lay is approx. £4,125 plus VAT. Giles had estimated the cost of other materials as £550 for timber, £300 for aggregate plus labour and hire of machinery. Other ideas for a suitable surface were welcomed. Giles and the Clerk met with Kevin Verlander the SCC Rights of Way officer on 26 February to get an initial reaction to the proposal. Kevin thought the scheme would be acceptable however until the new budgets came out in April he was not able to give an indication of how much money the County Council would have to contribute towards the scheme. Councillors discussed the proposal and thought the scheme was a good one to investigate further. In 2005 the Parish Council had worked on a joint improvement scheme for Church Walk, the car park and the footpath down the hill. The footpath improvements to create a bark chip path edged with timber had cost approx. £2,500; the path now looks in a similar sorry state to how it did before the 2005 improvements. Concern was expressed about the high estimated cost but it was agreed it would be better to spend more and construct a path with a long lasting, maintenance free, safe surface. Giles hoped that some of the labour costs could be saved by using volunteers. It was agreed to discuss this again once the Rights of Way team could give an indication of how much money was available for the scheme. Giles had not looked into a solution for a

safer route for pedestrians from Church Walk/Mill Lane to Vale Lane or got together with volunteers to tidy any areas in the village due to the cold weather.

### **49/13 TO DISCUSS THE REPRINTING OF THE KERSEY VILLAGE ORGANISATIONS BOOKLET**

A printed booklet with information about Kersey was produced many years ago; stocks of this booklet ran out a couple of years ago. It including information about village history, the Church, the school, all the Kersey village organisations and a list of businesses based in Kersey. Information on the Kersey website was initially based on the information in this booklet. In 2011 the Parish Council agreed to reproduce this booklet using some of the money received from the Meercat advertising donation. There is £100 set aside in reserves. The Clerk proposed that to make things more efficient all the information for the booklet is taken directly off the Kersey website; it would only need a few minor changes. The Clerk has recently been working on the website to ensure the information is up to date. After some discussion it was agreed that a new booklet should be produced for every household in the parish and then to have a few additional copies ready for when new people move into the village. It will be an opportunity to promote all that goes on in Kersey to residents. Approx 200 booklets would be needed. It was hoped to get a new colour aerial photograph for the front cover and then to print the rest in black and white. The estimate for producing this booklet in 2011 was 50p per copy offered by Wayne Kerridge, who produced the previous booklet. It was agreed to title the publication 'A Guide to Kersey'.

### **50/13 REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT AND INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEMS**

Councillors all had a copy of the Parish Council's Internal Control Systems and went through the review of effectiveness of Internal Audit, copy appended. Councillors agreed that everything was in order and the internal audit and internal control systems are appropriate and effective.

### **51/13 REVIEW OF RISK ASSESSMENTS**

Councillors all had a copy of the Kersey Parish Council business risk assessment, appended. Having been through the document Councillors agreed it was appropriate and they were happy with the management of the risks identified. Councillors had also reviewed the mowing, strimming and hedge trimming risk assessment and the Parish Council office risk assessment, both appended. They were happy with these documents.

### **52/13 TRAINING**

The Clerk attended a SALC clerk's networking session in February. Information about training courses is regularly circulated to all Councillors.

### **53/13 REPORTS FROM MEETINGS**

John Maltby attended the SALC/Babergh Area meeting on 4 March. The main topic of discussion at the meeting was Neighbourhood Plans. This is an extract from the Babergh District Council website explaining Neighbourhood plans. Neighbourhood planning is a new way for communities to decide the future of the places where they live and work. They give local people a say over where new homes, shops and offices will be built and what they will look like. These powers have been granted through the Localism Act. Neighbourhood plans are planning policy documents prepared by local communities; either Town or Parish Councils, who would need expert guidance. When adopted, neighbourhood plans become part of the District Council Development Plan. This means they will sit alongside the Local Plan for the area and be the first thing considered in deciding whether or not planning permission should be given for new buildings, or for changes to existing buildings. Neighbourhood plans are about making sure new homes and businesses can be built where and how local people want them. They are expected to support economic growth, improve people's quality of life and also protect the natural environment. However they do not automatically grant planning permission, unless they contain a neighbourhood development order or community right to build order. So in most cases, developers will still need to apply for permission. Not everywhere will need to have a neighbourhood plan, particularly if there is

not much development being planned, or if the community do not want to take the lead in shaping the development that may happen. Neighbourhood plans are not compulsory so where there is no plan, decisions will still be guided by the area's Local Plan.

**54/13 FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

18 March 7pm Kersey Footpath Working Group in the village hall.

**55/13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

A question was asked about reclaiming VAT.

A Councillor had discussed with the landowner the possibility of the Footpath Working Group taking on responsibility for maintaining the area of land near the footpath down the hill between the church lych gate, and Cherry Hill. The landowner was happy in principle but wished for a small payment. This will be discussed again under the agenda item for tidying up scruffy areas of the village.

The meeting was adjourned for 'Parish Time'

Nothing raised.

The meeting was reconvened.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.51 pm.

Appended to these minutes are 12 sheets:

Kersey Parish Council Receipts and Payments to date (2 sheets)

Kersey Parish Council Finance sheet for 11 March 2013

Kersey Parish Council Budget comparison to 31 March 2013

Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit for Kersey Parish Council

Kersey PC Business Risk Assessment (3 sheets)

Kersey PC Mowing, Strimming and Hedge Trimming Risk Assessment (2 sheets)

Kersey PC Office Risk Assessment (2 sheets)